

DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL

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CHP SAYS DRIVE WITH CONSIDERATION FOR OTHERS THIS THANKSGIVING

California Highway Patrol (CHP) Commissioner Dwight Helmick is advising California motorists to use their safety belts, drive with consideration for other motorists, and avoid alcohol if they plan to be on the road during this year's Thanksgiving holiday.

"In the 30 years I've been with the CHP," said Helmick, "the best holiday travel advice I've heard is this: Be well rested when you start, begin early and allow extra time in case of congested traffic, make sure you and everybody else in your vehicle buckles up, obey the traffic laws and don't drive if you've been drinking.

"Thanksgiving is a terrific holiday for getting together with family members," he noted. "Don't let a collision spoil this year's get-together."

The Commissioner pointed out that the vast majority of collisions are avoidable. "Most collisions could have been avoided completely if one of the drivers had reacted just one second faster. Being alert can save your vehicle – or more importantly, your life or your loved ones lives.

"Be sure to wear a safety belt," Helmick said. "The law requires that every driver and passenger be buckled up without exception. Californians are doing an outstanding job of obeying this law. More than 90 percent already wear their safety belts. It's that other ten percent that we want to reach so they, too, can benefit from the protection a safety belt provides."

The CHP is also concerned about drivers who drink before getting behind the wheel. "If you plan to consume alcohol, let someone who hasn't been drinking do the driving. Most people's driving abilities are likely to be impaired after only a couple of drinks," Commissioner Helmick said. "This is

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more significant if they are tired. Using a designated driver to get you home safely also protects everyone else on the road.”

The 102-hour Thanksgiving holiday reporting period for this year starts at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, November 24, and ends at midnight, Sunday, November 28. During this “maximum enforcement period” all available CHP officers will be patrolling California roads and highways.

“Our officers will be especially watching for aggressive drivers – those that operate their vehicles without regard for other’s safety,” Helmick said. “A driver who speeds, tailgates, or cuts in and out of traffic should expect to spend a little of his or her holiday with a CHP officer.

“Thanksgiving is a time for us all to be thankful for all that we have. If fewer people lose their lives on our roads and highways, I will have something else to be truly thankful for,” Commissioner Helmick concluded.

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